

Spring Cleaning



Theme: Jesus cleanses the temple. 3rd Sunday in Lent

Object: A mop, pail, sponges, and other cleaning supplies

Scripture: In the temple courts he found men selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both men and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To the sellers of doves he said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!" (John 2:14-16 (NIV))

Spring is just a few days away. Spring is such a wonderful time of the year. The temperature begins to warm and the world begins to take on a fresh new look. The trees start to put on leaves, the grass begins to turn green, and flowers start to bloom. Everything is beautiful! There are other things that tell us that spring is here too. For one thing, the spring cleaning season begins. Another sign that spring is here is that many people have started their spring cleaning.

Look at all of this stuff I brought with me this morning. I have a mop, a pail, sponges, floor cleaner, window cleaner, towels, and dust cloths. It looks like I am getting ready to clean house. Do your parents do any spring cleaning at your house? Spring is a good time to give your house a good going over and clean everything up and get rid of the junk that you don't need.

This morning I want to tell you about a time when Jesus did some spring cleaning. It was time for the annual Passover celebration, so Jesus traveled to Jerusalem. When he arrived in Jerusalem, Jesus went to the temple. He could not see with his eyes. There in the temple area he saw people who were selling cattle, sheep, and doves for the people to use as sacrifices in the temple. There were tables set up for money changers so that people could change their money for their temple taxes. It looked more like a carnival than a house of worship.

Jesus did not like what he saw. He was so angry that he made a whip from some rope and he drove the cattle, sheep and those who were selling them from the temple. He went to the tables of the money changers and turned them over, scattering coins all over the temple floor. To the ones who were selling the doves he said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market." Yes, I would say that Jesus did some spring cleaning in the temple that day!

As we think about Jesus cleansing the temple, we should also think about some other cleaning that needs to be done in a season called Lent. At first, the word Lent meant 'the season of spring'. But it has now become much more than that. It is a time to look inside ourselves and see if there is anything in us that needs to be changed. Are there any areas of your life where Jesus needs to do some 'spring cleaning'? I know there are in mine!

Dear Father, during this time when we think of 'spring cleaning', we ask you to forgive us when we do wrong and help us clean. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

NOTE: For those of you who are not coming into the spring season, adapt the sermon by removing references to spring cleaning and talk about cleaning in general.

Scripture Reading: John 2:13-22

BROOM RELAY: Divide the children into two teams and use a broom to play a relay of pushing a cleaning bucket and forth to the finish line.

SUPPLY BUCKET RELAY: Children will take turns running around the room area that is designated to find 5 cleaning supplies to place in their bucket and return to their team. If there are a lot of cleaning supplies everywhere, the children can continue to play or the teacher can have a leader for each team that will take the bucket with 5 items and run around the room again for the next players.

HEART FINGER PAINTING: Children will be given finger paints and paper to finger paint a large heart with marbled swirls around the heart. Children can use items given to decorate their painting or to write some important words from today's lesson. Items could be old tooth brushes, craft sticks, toothpicks, etc.

PENNY SCRAMBLE: The teacher will have many pennies for the children to dive for around the room as the teacher says, GO! Tell children to listen carefully to today's lesson to hear what part "money" had to do with our Bible story.

HEART POCKET SEWING: The children will trace and cut out two hearts of the same size/shape. The teacher will punch around the edges of the heart for children to "sew" the heart together with yarn or ribbon of choice. Let the children place small pieces of paper INSIDE the heart that they have written about today's lesson and cleaning our hearts. Please JESUS.

CLEANING SKITS: Divide the class into two teams and let each team quickly plan a skit to have the other team guess what part of the house or church that they are CLEANING. Children could use mops and brooms from today's lesson if desired. (Examples of areas to clean could be the toilet, the church pews, a bedroom with beds and closets, etc.)

CLEAN HEARTS: Provide children with construction paper and supplies to draw and cut out a large heart to display. Write words from today's lesson that GOD WANTS A CLEAN HEART, etc.

GARBAGE BAGS: The teacher can have many small pieces of paper with words of things that we should not do in our lives.... The teacher can write ideas such as lies, cheating, disobeying, hitting, swearing, hurting someone's feelings, etc. that the teacher desires. Children will be told to find at least 5 to 10 pieces of paper around the room and place them in their "garbage bag" which can be a small brown lunch bag. After the children have placed their DIRTY things in their "garbage bag", they can form a circle to talk about today's lesson and then everyone take turns in throwing their "garbage bags" in the big trash and PRAY together that GOD will keep them clean.

CLEAN MOUTHS: The teacher can draw two very large mouths on a poster board. One mouth will say GOOD THINGS and the other mouth will say BAD THINGS. Children can take turns going to one of the mouths to write a word that is good or bad that comes out of the mouth, such as the GOOD mouth could be please, thank you, may I, come with me, sing praises to the Lord, call someone to encourage them..... and the BAD mouth would say bad words, tongue, hurtful words, singing bad music.

Cleaning House



Theme: Jesus Cleanses the Temple. 3rd Sunday of Lent, Year B

Object: Some cleaning items: broom, mop, sponges, dust cloth, etc.

Scripture: In the temple courts he found men selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!" John 2:14-16 (NIV)

Mops, brooms, sponges, a dust cloth... what do we use these things for? We use them when we clean house, right? Do you ever help your mom with the cleaning around your house? I don't know about your mom, but there are many times when my mom thought our house needed cleaning when it looked just fine to me. Well, how do you know when it's time to clean house? Well here are some signs that will definitely let you to know that it is time to clean house.

It is time to clean house when your feet stick to the floor when you walk through the kitchen.

It is time to clean house when your mother can't find you when she comes into your room to wake you up in the morning.

It is time to clean house when the kids in the neighborhood use their fingers to write "wash me" in the dirt on your windows.

It is time to clean house when there are more dishes in the kitchen sink than there are in the cabinets.

It is time to clean house when you have enough dust bunnies under your bed to start a bunny farm.

Well, I think you get the idea! I know that your house never gets THAT dirty, but the truth of the matter is, we all need to do a little house cleaning at times.

Today we are going to learn about a time when Jesus did some house cleaning. It was time for the annual Passover celebration, so Jesus traveled to Jerusalem. When he arrived in Jerusalem, Jesus went to the temple. He could not believe what he saw. Right there in the temple area he saw people who were selling cattle, sheep, and doves that were used as sacrifices in the temple. There were even tables set up where men were changing money so that people could pay their temple taxes. It looked more like a flea market than a house of worship.

Jesus did not like what he saw. He was so angry that he picked up a piece of rope, made a whip, and drove the sheep, cattle, and those who were selling them out of the temple. Next, he went to the money changers and turned their tables over, scattering coins all over the temple floor. To the ones who were selling the doves he said, "Get out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market." I would say that Jesus did some serious house cleaning in the temple that day!

As we think about Jesus cleansing the temple, we should also be reminded that there is some other cleaning that needs to be done. The Bible tells us that we are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in us. (1 Cor

3:16) The season of Lent is a good time for us to look inside ourselves and see if there is anything in us that needs to be cleansed. Are there some areas of your life where you need to do some house cleaning? I know there are some! Mine!

Father, help us to remember that we are your temple and that your Spirit lives in us. Help us to keep our lives clean and useful for service to you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

ROPE TUG OF WAR: Divide the children into two teams and play tug of war with a heavy rope. Tell children to listen carefully to the Bible story later and see what a ROPE was used for by Jesus in the Temple.

CLEANING RELAY: Divide the children into two teams. Place the same amount of cleaning supplies in two buckets. Run a "cleaning relay" back and forth, with each child taking one cleaning item from the bucket and taking it back to the team and tagging the next player who will run to the team's bucket and take another cleaning item. This will continue until the bucket is empty. The team that empties their bucket first is the winner.

MOP RIDING RELAY: Divide the children into two teams. Give each team a mop to ride as they run a relay for their team to a line and back. The team that completes the ride with all of its team members is the winner. Tell children to listen carefully to the Bible story and see where cleaning supplies might be used in our story and to LISTEN to WHAT needs to be cleaned!!

TEMPLE TUBE TALK: Have the children stand in a long line. Give the first child in the line a slip of paper with an item from today's lesson that needed to be cleaned. (selling doves, sheep, cattle; exchanging money) Using a paper towel tube, the first child will whisper what is written on the slip of paper through the tube to the next child. Each child will then whisper into the tube to the next player until the last child has heard what was whispered through the temple tube. That child will say the words out loud and see if it is the same word that was written on the slip of paper. Play again with another player beginning the TEMPLE TUBE TALK. Encourage children to use words that they can think of for areas in our own lives that need to be cleaned (such as our speech, our prayer life, our obedience, what our eyes watch, or what our ears listen to, etc.)

TEMPLE BUILDING: Give children blocks or boxes, etc to build a temple. Let the children take turns in telling something that happened in today's Bible story and then telling how they can worship God in HIS HOUSE. Children may enjoy knocking the building down as the story is told and building it up again.

TEMPLE ART: Give each child a piece of heavy paper/poster board and help them to draw or trace a large temple. Let the children use colored markers to decorate the windows of their temple to look like stain glass art. The children might also glue craft sticks on the drawing to create the look of a roof on the temple. When the temple is finished, have the children draw a sign beside their temple with an arrow that says, "Worship Here".

TEMPLE KEYS: Let the children cut out several keys that the teacher has prepared before class time. ([Key Template](#)) On each key, the children will write something important that we SHOULD do in our church. (Examples: one key can say worship, another key can say praise, another key can say sing, another key can say pray, etc.) Give children an inexpensive key ring to hook their Temple Keys onto and take home to hang on their wall!

TREASURE CHEST: Give the children a small box and the supplies to decorate their box to put coins into. Let the children put real or pretend "coins" into their box as they discuss today's Bible lesson. Ask children how our offerings are used for God. (Examples: to buy supplies, to help poor people, to share money with missionaries, to pay the church staff, etc.)